

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST
3 SERVICE AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO CONSIDER
4 DESIGNATIONS THAT PROTECT MEANINGFUL ACCESS FOR TRADITIONAL
5 USES FOR LANDS PROPOSED TO BE PART OF AN EXPANDED PECOS
6 WILDERNESS AREA AND FOR ANY OTHER WILDERNESS PROPOSALS IN NEW
7 MEXICO AND TO INCLUDE TRADITIONAL FOREST-DEPENDENT, "GATEWAY"
8 AND LAND GRANT COMMUNITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY
9 DESIGNATION AND MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR THESE LANDS.

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11 WHEREAS, for generations, small, rural and historically
12 isolated communities in New Mexico have depended on the
13 health of the surrounding forests, grasslands and rivers as
14 their primary sources of food, medicine, fuel, building
15 materials and water; and

16 WHEREAS, the health and vitality of these communities
17 have traditionally been more dependent on the health of their
18 environment than on commerce with urban centers; and

19 WHEREAS, as a consequence of this dependence on natural
20 systems, New Mexico developed a multitude of cultures that
21 are rooted in a connection to land and water; and

22 WHEREAS, in recent decades, traditional forest-
23 dependent, "gateway" and land grant communities have
24 experienced increasing restrictions on, and denials of, their
25 traditional access to and use of adjacent lands and waters;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, as these restrictions and denials have grown,
3 the traditional economy of these communities has been
4 undercut, and many formerly self-reliant families have become
5 at least partially dependent on government assistance; and

6 WHEREAS, a national forest should not only be a place
7 that families visit, it should also be a partner that they
8 work with on a daily basis to ensure that the next generation
9 does not lose understanding of natural systems, including the
10 importance of periodic grass fires, the value of beaver dams
11 and the care that humans need to take when using wild lands;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, the health and safety of traditional forest-
14 dependent, gateway and land grant communities remain
15 dependent on the health of their surrounding lands,
16 particularly with regard to the quantity and quality of water
17 flowing from them and their susceptibility to catastrophic
18 wildfire; and

19 WHEREAS, the Pecos and other wilderness areas sit within
20 national forest lands that border several traditional forest-
21 dependent, gateway and land grant communities throughout New
22 Mexico, and the United States department of agriculture
23 forest service will be evaluating proposals to expand the
24 Pecos and other wilderness areas; and

25 WHEREAS, a wilderness designation is a land management

1 alternative available for national forest land; and

2 WHEREAS, due to access rules in wilderness areas, it is
3 critical to protect the ability for traditional
4 forest-dependent, gateway and land grant communities to
5 meaningfully access certain traditional uses; and

6 WHEREAS, all five national forests in New Mexico, which
7 are the Carson, Cibola, Gila, Lincoln and Santa Fe national
8 forests, are currently undergoing a forest plan revision
9 process to update their forest management plans; and

10 WHEREAS, each national forest is federally required, as
11 part of the forest plan revision, to inventory and assess all
12 forest system lands to determine which, if any, lands have
13 wilderness character and, upon identification of such lands,
14 evaluate them for determining how those lands should be
15 managed; and

16 WHEREAS, in the past, these evaluations did not include
17 considerations for socioeconomic or cultural impacts on
18 traditional forest-dependent, gateway and land grant
19 communities; and

20 WHEREAS, New Mexico recently experienced the creation of
21 land management protections for the Rio Grande del Norte
22 national monument, that specifically retain certain
23 traditional uses, such as harvesting pinon nuts and wood
24 gathering, and in which adjacent gateway communities were
25 provided a meaningful role in the development of the land

1 management plan;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that special care be exercised with
4 regard to changing and developing the land management methods
5 for the national forest lands to maintain local cultural
6 values, to ensure watershed health, to protect meaningful
7 access for traditional uses and to allow government agencies
8 to respond to wildfires; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States department
10 of agriculture forest service be requested to provide
11 traditional forest-dependent, gateway and land grant
12 communities, Indian pueblos and acequias with a meaningful
13 role in the development of appropriate and beneficial
14 designations and management plans for lands under its
15 jurisdiction; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States department
17 of agriculture forest service be requested to engage in an
18 immediate dialogue with all of the traditional forest-
19 dependent, gateway and land grant communities of all of the
20 national forests in New Mexico with regard to potential
21 designations for all lands proposed to be evaluated for
22 possible inclusion in the Pecos wilderness and for other
23 proposed wilderness designations now and in the future; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the regional forester for region 3 of the

1 United States department of agriculture forest service; the
2 forest supervisors for each of the national forests within New
3 Mexico; the principal executive office holder for each of the
4 Indian tribes, pueblos and nations within New Mexico; the
5 chairs of the land grant council and the acequia commission;
6 the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation; and
7 the governor.

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